Because of the nature of her sources, Piette interprets the attitudes and actions of the elites in structuring domestic service more than she assesses the response of servants to the conditions of their lives. Her decision to concentrate solely on urban domestic service is understandable, especially considering the complexity of the research involved. Unfortunately, the exclusion of the rural economy from the study also has eliminated any consideration of the background of most urban servants. Piette notes that, although some servants were supplied by urban orphanages, the majority of servants in Brussels came from the countryside outside the capital. As demand increasingly exceeded supply, servants were recruited from rural areas further removed from the city. The differences between city and country, mistress and maid, thus became even more pronounced. To understand the values, expectations, and actions of the servants who made the transition to the city, we must know much more about the rural Belgian society from which they came and the family or community networks to which they belonged. There is a definite need for a study of rural society and migration to complement Piette's valuable study of urban domesticity.

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Geoffrey Plank — *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign Against the Peoples of Acadia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. Pp. 239.

An Unsettled Conquest is a fascinating analysis of the complexities of life in seventeenth-century Nova Scotia. Geoffrey Plank offers a fresh insight into the intricate relationships between the peoples of Acadia, and he skilfully demonstrates how the British conquest of Acadia was best understood as an evolutionary process rather than a rupture in history. The author illustrates, in a very objective and insightful manner, "the complex ramifications of the conquest for different groups of English-speakers as well as for the Mi'kmaq and Acadians" (p. 5). The author examined an abundance of sources with a fine comb to present a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the geopolitics of British Nova Scotia.

Throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the peoples of Acadia had regularly been caught in the midst of imperial struggles. Yet their lives had returned to normal after each disruption. Underneath the surface, however, a "complex web of relations, marked by both animosity and interdependence, had long linked the people of Acadia with each other and with New England and New France" (p. 12). Plank explores this web of relations using various government documents, manuscripts, colonial archives, and family papers. Plank also makes valuable use of two compelling narratives to give his study a human dimension. The first tells the story of an Acadian merchant named Jacques Maurice Vigneau, while the second narrative recounts the trials and tribulations of a Mi'kmaq leader, Jean-Baptiste Cope. The combination of narrative and research allowed Plank to shed light on the ambivalence and opportunism that characterized the Anglo-Mi'kmaq-French relationship of this period.

Plank identified the two assumptions that guided the decisions and actions of New England officials throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries: the supposition that French officials had allied with the Acadians and Mi'kmaq, and that any of these groups was an appropriate target for retribution (p. 37). Indeed, a number of New Englanders came to believe that they faced an alliance of enemies in Acadia because the Acadians, Mi'kmaq, and French had come to develop an intimate relationship. For this reason, a number of New England officials advocated a divide and conquer strategy in Acadia. Such officials held lingering hopes that, once divorced from the Mi'kmaq, the Acadians could be converted into allies and loyal subjects (pp. 69–71).

Plank spends much time analysing the intricate Anglo-Acadian relationship, but he also fills an important void in the history of British Nova Scotia's native population. If British and New Englanders believed in the eventuality of Acadian cooperation and compliance, Plank's study reveals the ambivalence and ethnocentrism which pervaded the Anglo-Mi'kmaq relation. Since the early 1700s, British policy towards the Mi'kmaq had been twofold: to engage the native population in commerce and to convert them to Protestantism. However, these plans had consistently foundered, as the Mi'kmaq were "deeply devoted to their own customs and to the network of alliance and trading relations they had established in the region" (p. 67). As violence between New Englanders and Mi'kmaq escalated in the 1740s, many officials became convinced that the Mi'kmaq were innately irrational and aggressive.

British officials had been unable to take resolute action against the peoples of Acadia in the early 1700s for two fundamental reasons. First, disagreements and internal divisions among the conquerors rendered them incapable of taking any concerted action. Secondly, the antagonistic stances of the peoples of Acadia undermined and subsequently altered imperial plans (p. 42). To compound their problems, the "real power in the colony lay within the local communities, among the ostensibly conquered peoples" (pp. 114–115). The lack of power and influence, and the mounting frustration associated with this situation, only reinforced the New Englanders' desire to punish the people of Acadia. However, the geopolitical circumstances of Acadia simply did not give the British sufficient influence to take concerted action at this time.

If these two underlying assumptions formulated New England's policy towards the peoples of Acadia, attitudes periodically varied. Plank identified the three main thrusts of New England attitudes towards the peoples of Acadia. In the first phase, lasting from the 1690s to the 1710s, New Englanders were apathetic to any plan designed to integrate or assimilate the residents of Acadia. From the 1720s to the late 1740s, New Englanders began to think that they could obtain the Acadians' cooperation. Numerous oath-taking ceremonies had been held in 1729 and 1730 in which Acadians swore allegiance to the British crown while refusing to take up arms against the French (pp. 103–104). By the early 1750s, the increased British presence and assertiveness of the French and Mi'kmaq meant that New Englanders could not longer trust "their own ability to assess, track, and predict the political allegiances of the region's diverse communities" (p. 123). As tension escalated, offi-

cials discarded cooperation and opted for coercion. They also grew more eager to affirm their dominance over the colony and considered other means to divorce the French and Mi'kmaq.

As Plank convincingly argues, Nova Scotia's unique geopolitical conditions in the mid 1750s precipitated the Acadian deportation. Without justifying the deportation, Plank is able to show how it represented the "culmination of a long effort by the British to impose order in Nova Scotia" (p. 141). The author argues that the pent-up frustration resulting from the inability to separate the Mi'kmaq and Acadians, the establishment of a permanent British military force, and the outbreak of hostilities in Europe intertwined to produce the Acadian removal of 1755. Curiously, Plank neglected the importance of demographic change in New England in the 1740s; it would have been worthwhile to discuss in greater length the rapid population growth in New England in this period. By the 1740s, the rising rate of immigration threatened to overcrowd long-settled areas. Several authors have speculated that New Englanders were eager to expel the settlers of Acadia to make room for their growing population. While such a theory is not essential to Plank's thesis, it does help the reader appreciate the numerous forces that converged in the late 1740s to precipitate the Acadian removal.

The author states in various chapters that the parishes and missions of the Catholic Church represented one of the strongholds of authority in Acadia, alongside that of the Acadian villages and the Mi'kmaq bands. Yet Noami Griffiths argued that the Acadian society was not priest-ridden, nor were Acadians particularly devout Catholics. If Plank is to argue that the Catholic Church played a significant role in the "Acadian" alliance of the north, he could have devoted more attention in chapter 4 to the Acadian-Mi'kmaq-Catholic Church alliance, especially in the decade or so preceding the deportation. While it may be that the importance of Abbé Le Loutre's role in the Acadian deportation has been overemphasized, Le Loutre offers an ideal glimpse into the Catholic Church's meddling in Acadia. The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* published an excellent biography on Le Loutre in which the authors lengthily discuss the various threats the church used to intimidate the Acadians and Mi'kmaq into utter obedience.

In the end, Plank argues that the deportation marked the conclusion of a long period of imperial ambition. Traditional historiography had often tended to present a rather simplistic view of the pre-Conquest period by vilifying Charles Lawrence, a militaristic aristocrat who became governor of Acadia in 1753. Plank was able to shed light on the broader and far more complex picture of British Nova Scotia. Throughout the 1700s, the British had been galvanized by a simple vision of the future, in which "peoples of diverse European backgrounds would join together in a single society, and all native peoples would be driven away" (p. 167). *An Unsettled Conquest* tells the story of British Nova Scotia while unravelling the tale of great expectations, shattered dreams, and tragic endings. Plank's study fills a significant void in the historiography of this period.

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